

After reading an Editorial in the Chicago Sun- Times by John E. Rooney, who is the CEO and President of US Cellular, I felt compelled to write.

Although I live in the City of Chicago, I can relate to the plight of rural residents who cannot get quality cell phone service. I am a T-Mobile customer who has been trying to switch my cell phone service for the following reasons:

- 1) Now, more than ever before, I get multiple dropped calls on a daily basis. Even when I am in the Chicagoland area. I know of other friends and family that are having the same issue.
- 2) In 12/05, my contract with T-mobile was up for renewal but I explained to the rep that I was hesitant to renew my contract since they did not cover a rural area that I spend a lot of time at on the weekends and in the summer months. They assured me that they were erecting a new cell tower 10 miles from Sublette, IL and that they were also entering into an agreement with another cell phone company to use their towers should I encounter a dead zone area. Based on this info, I renewed my contract for 2 years. However, over a year and a half later, nothing has changed. All I rec'd was a broken promise. In order to switch my service to another provider, I am forced to pay a \$400 penalty. (\$200/phone) Even though I have been with T-Mobile for several years, they refuse to negotiate that penalty. Therefore, I am stuck with inferior service.

Please help improve the lives of rural Americans, and those who travel to rural areas, by protecting and expanding the Universal Service Fund (USF) for wireless providers. Wireless telecommunications is no longer a luxury in our society; it is a fundamental necessity for public health, safety and economic development.

Capping the fund will shut the door on rural America. Less USF support for rural wireless networks will leave us with poor coverage, dropped calls and dangerous dead zones. The urban/rural technology gap will only widen.

Rural America deserves the same cell phone service as our big cities. I urge you to expand – not cap – the USF.

Thank you,  
Craig Munson